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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/032,442	12/21/2001	Kenneth J. Muderlak	8026-1036	6103

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EXAMINER

KEASEL, ERIC S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3754

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/032,442

Applicant(s)

MUDERLAK, KENNETH J.

Examiner

Eric Keasel

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 April 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-40 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-27 and 34-40 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 28-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 21 December 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date Jan15 & Apr8 2004
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The reply filed on April 8, 2004 does not comply with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.121. The text of all pending claims, including withdrawn claims, must be submitted each time any claim has been amended. Also, claim 30 (of record) is not dependent on claim 26; so the amendment does not correspond to the claims of record. However, to further prosecution, the amendment has been entered and treated below.

Election/Restrictions

2. This application contains claims 1-27 and 34-40 drawn to an invention nonelected with traverse in the reply filed on October 6, 2003. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancelation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01.

Information Disclosure Statement

3. The information disclosure statement filed January 15, 2004 contains a reference already of record. The examiner has deleted this reference from the PTO-1449.

Drawings

4. Figures 10, 15, 16, and 17 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g). Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the

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examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

5. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the flange extending from the first bracket half (claims 30 and 33) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

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7. Claims 30 and 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claims 30 and 33 have been amended to recite that a flange extends from the first bracket half. However, the application as filed has the flange (76) of the enclosure extending past the first bracket half. This is a new matter rejection.

8. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

9. Claims 30-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 30 and 33 have been amended to recite that a flange extends from the first bracket half. However, the application as filed has the flange (76) of the enclosure extending past the first bracket half. It is vague and indefinite as to whether applicant is referring to the disclosed flange (76) or some other flange.

In claim 31, "the electromechanical flexible actuator" in line 9 lacks antecedent basis in the claims. Applicant has purposefully deleted all other references to "flexible". It is unclear if this is an oversight by applicant and the reference to "flexible" should be deleted or if applicant intends to recite that the power source is for a different actuator.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

10. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

11. Claims 28-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Muderlak et al. (WO 97/13086).

Muderlak et al. disclose a drive mechanism for a flush lever of a sanitary fixture (see Figs. 2-7) comprising an electromechanical actuator (60) mounted on a movable plate (62), within an enclosure (52), operably engaging the flush lever (30); first (74) and second (80) bracket halves projecting from the enclosure, substantially enclosing and rigidly engaging a bushing (44) and a hexagonal nut (46) securing the flush lever to the sanitary fixture; fasteners (84) for securing the first and second bracket halves to the enclosure, and a power source (104) for the electromechanical actuator; and wherein opposing faces of the first and second bracket halves comprise a complementary topography to the bushing and nut (compare Figs. 6 and 7 of Muderlak et al. to Figs. 10 and 11 of the present application).

Re claims 30 and 33, if the claims are meant to read that the flange of the enclosure extends past the first bracket half to limit the rotation of the drive mechanism relative to the sanitary fixture, then Muderlak et al. clearly disclose the limitation (compare Figs. 6 and 7 of Muderlak et al. to Figs. 10 and 11 of the present application).

Response to Arguments

12. Applicant's arguments filed April 8, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that they believe that amended Claims 28 and 31 are allowable (see the response, page 6, last two lines). The examiner disagrees. The only addition to claims 28 and 31 are that the actuator is mounted on a movable plate. The plate (62) of Muderlak et al. is movable.

Conclusion

13. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

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14. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric Keasel whose telephone number is (703) 308-6260. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Mancene can be reached on (703) 308-2696. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Eric Keasel 25 JUN 04

Eric Keasel
Examiner
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